



# NEWS

## R E L E A S E

**RALPH T. HUDGENS**  
COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE  
SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER  
INDUSTRIAL LOAN COMMISSIONER  
COMPTROLLER GENERAL

Seventh Floor, West Tower  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
[www.oci.ga.gov](http://www.oci.ga.gov)

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Contact: Matt Kilgallen  
404-651-7902  
[PublicInformation@oci.ga.gov](mailto:PublicInformation@oci.ga.gov)

### HUDGENS OFFERS SAFETY TIPS FOR GRILLING AND CAMPING

**Atlanta** – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph T. Hudgens urges Georgians to keep fire safety in mind when enjoying outdoor activities such as grilling and camping.

Commissioner Hudgens offers the following grilling tips:

- Keep flammable materials such as leaves and other debris away from the grill. Also, keep the grill a safe distance from your house or car.
- Don't leave a grill unattended. Keep children and pets away from cooking areas.
- Use only lighter fluid specifically made for starting charcoal fires. Don't use gasoline; it can explode. Don't add starter fluid of any kind after charcoals are lit.
- Always light a gas grill with the lid open and after cooking, shut off the tank first, then the burners.
- Use outdoor grills where they belong -- outdoors. Charcoal fires give off carbon monoxide, which can reach toxic levels in an enclosed space.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near. Use baking soda to handle small grease fires. If it's safe to get near the grill, close it to suffocate the flames.
- However, Georgia law states that "No charcoal or liquefied petroleum gas or liquid-fueled burners shall be kindled or maintained on balconies or within 10 feet of combustible patios on ground floors." That means no cooking is allowed on apartment balconies. Check with your complex to see if they have a common grilling area for residents that is safely away from the residential area.
- Always follow the instructions for your grill, and check your local fire codes.

When camping, Commissioner Hudgens suggests these campfire safety tips:

- If the campsite has a designated campfire ring, use it. If not, use a shovel to clear a 10-foot area of all leaves, grass and any other material that might burn. Scoop out a shallow hole in the center of the cleared area and place rocks around it.

- Never leave a campfire burning unattended, even for a few minutes.
- Keep all flammable objects (matches, food wrappings, plastic sheets, tents, etc.) away from the campfire.
- Be sure your campfire is out before you leave. Soak it with water, mix ashes with the soil, and soak again. Take extra care with partially burned wood; hot embers can re-ignite hours later.

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